



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 13, 2013

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TENNESSEE RECOGNIZES JUNE 15 AS WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS DAY IN TRIBUTE TO THE SAFETY AND DIGNITY OF SENIORS

NASHVILLE, TN – In recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), Gov. Bill Haslam has issued a proclamation acknowledging WEAAD and reminding Tennesseans that “seniors are valued members of society, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure they live safely and with dignity.”

Since 2006, when purple was chosen as the awareness color for WEAAD, Tennessee has played its part in promoting a better understanding of abuse and neglect of elderly and vulnerable adults. This year, the Tennessee Department of Human Services will continue this effort.

“Elder abuse is a tremendous issue facing seniors in our communities, said Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Adult and Family Services Yvonnia Brown. “It is the responsibility of each of us to know the signs of abuse and be empowered to speak up and help in any way we can.”

In 2012, the department’s Adult Protective Services (APS) program investigated approximately 11,018 reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults. In 2011, APS investigated approximately 10,497 reports of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation and approximately 9,400 in 2010.

Elder abuse is an underreported crime because victims are often isolated, vulnerable to the abuser or unable to speak for themselves. Many victims are reluctant to report abuse because they may feel ashamed and embarrassed, particularly if a family member is the abuser.

In recognition of WEAAD, which falls on Saturday, June 15, the Tennessee State Capitol cupola will be illuminated in purple.

Tennesseans are encouraged to wear something purple to help build awareness of this special day on June 14 and 15.

For more information, please visit: http://tn.gov/humanserv/adfam/afs_aps.html.

To report suspicion of neglect and/or abuse call toll free 1-888-APS-TENN (1-888-277-8366).

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